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S P E E C H

OF

HON. WILLIAM J. ALLEN,

OF ILLINOIS,

UPON

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE,

DELIVERED

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, JANUARY 27, 1864.

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HON. WILLIAM J. ALLEN

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S P E E C H .

The House being in Committee of the Whole on the state of the Union—

Mr. ALLEN said:

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I propose to make some observations upon the late annual message of the President. What I think of it I shall say without prelude; what I believe of his notions and purposes will not be attended or followed by any cringing explanation or apology. I assert as my deliberate opinion that the message was prepared by the President and those who acted as his immediate advisers with direct reference to a prolongation of the war, and that this desire to protract hostilities has for its object no other or higher aim than the reprehensible and criminal one of re-electing himself President, continuing the present party in power, and protracting the existing reign of plunder and robbery. By his own words, and by declarations of his chief advisers, he stands convicted of criminal hypocrisy in regard to matters vital to the existence of the country; and now, having thrown off those restraints which were for a while imposed alone by his timidity, he unblushingly proclaims himself the arbiter of States, and assumes to deal with their governments and the rights and property of loyal people with a sway more cruel and despotic than is claimed for any monarch or despot in the world. Not content with violating his official and other pledges, and a total disregard of the platform upon which he came into power, he has usurped the forbidden powers of the Constitution, and assumes to deal with individuals and States as though they were the playthings of his malice or mere fields of plunder for his adherents.

I shall pass by *the causes of the war*. With the executive department in his hands, it proved inevitable. Though many believed that war, no matter how produced, would in the then condition of the public mind prove the grave of the Republic, yet when the dire necessity came a very large majority of the people accepted the issue which rebellion had tendered, and lavishly offered their blood and treasure to the cause of the Government. And I assert that never, in ancient or modern times, were the issues of any war so clearly made or so sharply defined. On the one side was an open, bold, and organized resistance to the lawful authority of the Federal Government; on the other the military power of that

Government was invoked for the purpose, the sole purpose, of putting down armed rebellion and enforcing its rightful authority wherever it had been obstructed or opposed. I repeat that this was the only issue, *the sole purpose*, for which, before the 22d of September, 1862, a million soldiers had rallied beneath the flag of the Constitution.

I said the President and his advisers had been guilty of wilful deception. I will make good the charge. It is true that in the attempt I shall submit nothing which should be new to any member present, nor can I hope to excite even a feeling of shame on the part of those who, though subordinate in position, are in complicity with the President. Though less potential for mischief, there are present those who are blessed with better faculties and higher endowments than the President, and who are therefore no less guilty of the wicked purposes which I impute to him.

The object of war among civilized people should be PEACE. War as a means to any other end can never be justified. What, I repeat, produced the war? All men know it was armed resistance to the rightful authority of the Government. What end and aim did Congress and the loyal people propose when they authorized the employment of the largest armies of modern times? Let Congress, the Executive, and his advisers answer; and when they have answered, let the unerring facts of history brand them as false-hearted triflers with the lives of the brave men who are daily filling unnoticed graves; and let patriots everywhere who still love constitutional liberty rise up, and by the powerful engine of the ballot, which despotism cannot now wrest from them, hurl the present imbecile from power, and save the country, which at this moment is struggling in the agonies of eternal death. I omit, for the present, all reference to the President's inaugural. When it was spoken hostilities had not begun. I come down to a later day, to the first battle of Bull Run, at which time Congress was in session. Before this the war had been regarded by public men of "the last dollar and last man" persuasion, and by persons who, however unsound on Christ, were orthodox upon the nigger, as a mere holiday sport.

Buggies, hacks, gigs, Jersey wagons, mules and horses were in demand at fabulous prices;

the road from Washington to Bull Run was crowded with Senators and Representatives, contractors and courtesans, eunuchs and strong minded women, all intent upon witnessing the impending rout of the rebels. The sequel is known. The panic in this city among those who are now chiefs among the loyal leaguers will be long remembered by all who thought the public safety would be promoted by retaining a quorum of members. When the panic was over and Beauregard had failed to occupy the Capitol, the House of Representatives adopted the following resolution, introduced by the venerable and patriotic Crittenden, now no more, with but two dissenting votes:

"That this war is not waged in any spirit of oppression, or for any purpose of conquest or subjugation, or purpose of overthrowing or interfering with the rights or established institutions of these States, but to defend and maintain the supremacy of the Constitution and to preserve the Union, with all the dignity, equality, and rights of the several States unimpaired, and that as soon as these objects are accomplished the war ought to cease."

Immediately after the passage of this resolution, every approach to the Capitol was crowded with regiments and brigades who had tendered their services in a war to be conducted for the holy purpose avowed in that resolution. So great was the rush to arms that, shortly thereafter, the chairman of the Committee on Military Affairs in the Senate had to announce that more troops were being offered than the Government could accept. And much more than this, the Union men of the South were cheered and strengthened by this formal assurance that they had been right in defending the President when charged by the rebels with designing a grand John Brown raid upon the slave States, and the degradation of the whites to the level of the negro. A short time afterwards a similar resolution was submitted to the Senate by Andrew Johnson, of Tennessee, and, my recollection is, unanimously adopted. But a few days before this, on the 4th day of July, 1861, the President spoke to Congress as follows:

"Lest there be some uneasiness in the minds of candid men as to what is to be the course of the Government toward the Southern States after the rebellion shall have been suppressed, the Executive deems it proper to say it will be his purpose then, as ever, to be guided by the Constitution and the laws; and that he probably will have no different understanding of the powers and duties of the Federal Government relatively to the rights of the States and the people under the Constitution than that expressed in the inaugural address. He desires to preserve the Government, that it may be administered for all, as it was administered by the men who made it. Loyal citizens everywhere have the right to claim this of their Government; and the Government has no right to withhold or neglect it. It is not perceived that, in giving it, there is any coercion, any conquest, or any subjugation in any just sense of those terms."

About the same time, a member of the Cabinet, Hon. Caleb B. Smith, since deceased,

proceeded to Providence, in the State of Rhode Island, and addressed to the public the following cheering words:

"The theory of this Government is that the States are sovereign within their proper sphere. The Government of the United States has no more right to interfere with the institution of slavery in South Carolina than it has to interfere with the peculiar institutions of Rhode Island, whose benefits I have enjoyed to-day.

"But, my friends, during the last summer, when the great political contest was raging throughout the land, then it was that designing and dishonest men, for the purpose of accomplishing their own selfish schemes, appealed to the prejudices of the Southern people, denouncing those who supported Mr. Lincoln as abolitionists; as men who would disregard the constitutional rights of the South, and transcend the powers of the Government. Excited by means of these iniquitous appeals, they were ready to take arms to prevent the inauguration of that President whom a majority of the people had declared to be the man of their choice.

"My friends, I have known the President long and well. It has been my fortune to be selected as one of his constitutional advisers. I have had the honor of being connected with this Administration since its commencement, and I tell you to-night that you cannot find in South Carolina a man more anxiously, religiously, and scrupulously disposed to observe all the features of the Constitution relating to slavery than Abraham Lincoln." * * *

"My friends, we make no war upon Southern institutions. We recognize the right of South Carolina and Georgia to hold slaves if they desire them. But, my friends, we appeal to you to uphold the great banner of our glorious country, and to leave the people of that country to settle these domestic matters according to their own choice and the exigencies which the times may present." * * *

"Let New England rally promptly and earnestly, and I tell you rebellion will be crushed to the earth, and the stars and stripes will be raised over a united country. Then we shall have peace. Peace will spread her benign influence over this land, and happiness be restored, business revived, and the blessings of a free Government enjoyed.

"I do not invoke you to engage in this war as a war against slavery. We are warring for a different principle." * * *

"It is not the province of the Government of the United States to enter into a crusade against the institution of slavery. I would proclaim to the people of all the States of this Union the right to manage their institutions in their own way. I know that my fellow-citizens will recognize that as one fundamental principle upon which we commenced this contest. Let us not give our opponents any reason to complain of us in this respect. Let us not bring to bear upon them the power of despotism, but the power of the people of a republican Government, where the people rule."

It was in this spirit, and about the same time, that Mr. Seward, the Secretary of State, issued his instructions to our representatives abroad, in which he directed them to make public avowal of the purposes which would control the Government in prosecuting the war.

In his dispatches to Mr. Dayton, our minister at the court of St. Cloud, he used the following language:

"The framers of the Government, therefore, placed the entire control of slavery, as it was then existing, beyond the control of the Federal authorities, by leaving it to remain subject to the exclusive management and disposition of the several States themselves, and fortified it there with a provision for the return of fugitives from labor and service, and another securing an allowance of three-fifths of such persons in fixing the basis of direct taxation and representation."

* * * * *

"The condition of slavery in the several States will remain just the same whether it (the rebellion) succeed or fail. There is not even a pretext for the complaint that the disaffected States are to be conquered by the United States if the revolution fail; for the rights of the States, and the condition of every human being in them, will remain subject to exactly the same laws and forms of administration, whether the revolution shall succeed or whether it shall fail. In the one case, the States will be federally connected with the new confederacy; in the other, they would, as now, be members of the United States; but their constitutions and laws, customs, habits, and institutions in either case will remain the same.

"It is hardly necessary to add to this incontestible statement the further fact that the new President, as well as the citizens through whose suffrages he has come into the Administration, has always repudiated all designs whatever and wherever imputed to him and them of disturbing the system of slavery as it is existing under the Constitution and laws. The case, however, would not be fully presented if I were to omit to say that any such effort on his part would be unconstitutional, and all his actions in that direction would be prevented by the judicial authority even though they were assented to by Congress and the people."—Instructions to Mr. Dayton in 1861.

Mr. Chairman, I might consume my hour in producing the proofs of the falsehood and perfidy of those who thus deceived and betrayed the people of the North, and insulted and exasperated the Union men of the South.

What other evidence is needed of this shameless perfidy than the fact that the murderous adherents of John Brown, and the rebel adherents of Jefferson Davis were made glad? For so soon as the President avowed his purpose to change the war to one of crusade against slavery, of plunder and extermination, the apostles of Brown and the disciples of Davis were heard in mingled strains of joy and gladness. Each hoped and believed that the President had rendered a restoration of the Union impossible. Each being disunionists *per se*, each could afford to rejoice at every crime and blunder which paralyzed the arm of those who struggled and fought for peace and a reunited country. The effect of converting the war into a struggle for the freedom of the negro and the subversion of the slave States has unmistakably been to prolong and intensify the contest; and in that contest, while the South may be victims of the torch and the sword; while those who gladly welcomed the flag may be robbed of their property, and compelled to starve or swear to become the slaves of Lincoln, in the free and populous North the seeds of corruption and

tyranny are beginning to bring forth their baleful fruits. Even here almost every house except the habitations of contractors and abolitionists has become the abode of bereavement, often of desolation; taxation is grinding all classes except the petted plunderers of the Government; and while national and individual bankruptcy is impending, a more terrible doom is apprehended and feared. We cannot shut our eyes to the fact that the elective franchise is endangered. We have seen the rights of the people usurped in Maryland and Delaware and in portions of Kentucky. We have seen their constitutions and laws suspended by the edicts of the President and his minions, the ballot-box trampled into the dust, and the slavish creatures of his favoritism foisted into office and honor, not to represent the interests or the voice of the people of those States, not to discharge the duties incident to the offices which they obtained by a combination of fraud and force, but to register and assist in executing the decrees of a master, whose slaves, violator of the Constitution as he is, they are totally unworthy to be.

When this terrible issue is presented to the people of the free North next fall, as I am sure it will be, then we will see the beginning of the end. Every barricade which cruelty or malignity may erect between the voter and the ballot-box will be removed; the corrupt instruments of so monstrous a proceeding, whether black or white, whether mere provost marshals or major generals, will find the people of one State, at least, more anxious to preserve the purity of the ballot-box than the carcasses of those who may seek to enslave them. The late message, fairly construed, amounts to an unblushing avowal of this despotic intent. It is true that the purpose is at present avowed with reference only to the rebellious States; but the President has assumed to attach a condition to the right of suffrage there, which he may at any time as rightfully apply to the State in which I live. I do not now discuss the terms which he offers to *rebels in arms*. The only answer most of them will make to his proposals is that of defiance. I allude to the fact that he denies the *loyal men* of the South the right of suffrage; and asserts that they who have committed no crime shall have no legal or political rights unless they will first subscribe to a degrading oath, an oath so slavish that we may rightfully assume that it will be evaded or disregarded by many of those who may subscribe to its terms. But I ask whence comes the President's power thus to deal with loyal men who have violated no law, and consequently forfeited no rights of person or property? We can all understand how the loyal men of the South may lose their property. The armies which were created for the sole purpose of vindicating the law are stationed in the South; the President is "Commander-in-Chief," and he has grown fond of issuing imperial decrees which that Army is commanded to enforce. Almost every officer of

independence of character, who has exhibited the slightest repugnance to executing his decrees, has, when blandishments failed to seduce him, been dismissed the service in a manner designed to insure his disgrace. Why, then, should the President fear to issue an edict as sweeping and unrelenting as the torch of Omar; and by which, at one dash of the pen, he attempted to destroy property valued at \$2,000,000,000, and that too, without reference to the sex, age, condition, or opinions of its owners?

The press had been muzzled; Congress had become the mere register of his will; the loyal people of the South were either within rebel or Federal lines. No protest would be heard or heeded, while corrupt creatures might everywhere be found to flatter the author of such unpardonable maladministration. Or why then should we marvel that he who affected scorn for the Pope's bull against the comet should now claim mastery over the minds and consciences of men; nor be deterred from demanding of those who execrate his name and memory an oath—a solemn oath—to be true to his bulls hurled at sovereign States and the deep convictions of a majority of the people? I repeat that the President proposes terms to the loyal people of the South which all sensible men must know that they will regard as degrading. The jackals who follow the Army for the purposes of plunder are no part of the Southern people; and the Loyal Leagues which they may form within military posts I do not take into the account. Nor do I allude to those excrescences upon the political and military system known as "military governors"—such adventurers upon the hazard of a terrible civil war as Johnson of Tennessee, and Hamilton of Texas. They have been selected, I suppose, to "govern" those who hate them, just as eunuchs are appointed to guard the harem. Each excites the disgust of those who are compelled to endure their presence.

But, Mr. Chairman, the highest degree of iniquity in the President's bull against slavery and State rights, is to be found, perhaps, in his requirement of the same terms of the loyal men of the South to *retain* their rights, as are tendered to the vilest rebels in the land as the conditions upon which theirs may be *regained*. Take, for example the State of Tennessee. More than sixty thousand freemen of that State refused to vote for the ordinance of secession. About forty thousand voted against the secession of the State, although a large portion of it was occupied by rebel troops, and every means was used to overawe the people. That State has now one of its citizens upon the supreme bench. It has furnished over thirty thousand troops to the Government. Yet these soldiers, and other loyal people of that State, are to be disfranchised unless they will take the oath prescribed by the President for armed rebels. I repeat, if these terms can be imposed upon the loyal people of Tennessee by the President,

why may he not require the same thing of the people of Illinois? Imagine, if you please, General Butler swearing in the chivalry in that hall at Charleston in which for so many days in 1860 he alone, of all the men of New England, voted for his friend Jefferson Davis for President, in the hope of defeating the great Douglas by dividing the Democratic party sufficiently to make a victory of abolitionism certain, and thereby furnish a hollow pretext for Davis, Yancey & Co. to secede. Or, if you prefer it, go to Knoxville and witness the ministrations of Parson Brownlow while swearing in the Union men of East Tennessee—the true Union men who refused so long to swear fealty to Jeff. Davis. They will hardly degrade themselves by kneeling side by side with their rebel persecutors, and swearing fealty to Lincoln and all his proclamations in regard to slavery.

There is a building in Knoxville, I am told, in which, in June, 1860, that reverend champion of "Honest Abe" penned and published an appeal to the people of Tennessee to rally against Lincoln, the Abolitionist, and Hamlin, whose color was suggestive of a "free negro." In that building we will imagine him holding his high court of political expurgation. We can almost see him now as he opens the proceedings with prayer. Behind the reverend operator in Greek and hell-fire may be seen the heroic but saintly face of Horace Maynard, while the martial form of Brigadier General Andrew Johnson, in full military dress, glows as brightly as when he wrote his letter to Abraham, assuring him of General Buell's treason. We can almost hear them now calling for mourners, and administering Lincoln's oath. No doubt those sturdy mountaineers will, on bended knees, solemnly swear to "abide by and faithfully support *all* proclamations of the President made during the rebellion having reference to slaves." Mr. Chairman, at any other time such mockery would excite only that pity which we feel for the mummeries of the insane, and that contempt which fills us for those who engage only in works of sacrilege. But the times are too perilous, the issues too grave, to be passed thus lightly by. And this is the medicine, this the great panacea which is offered as the restorer of a dismembered Union. And there are those who profess to find in this silly proceeding a "wise plan" for bringing peace to a distracted and bleeding country. It does not rise to the dignity of respectable madness; it is too weak and contemptible for the epithet of imbecility. Sir, by what process are freemen not in the land or naval service of the country to be deprived of life, liberty, or property? Before the Constitution became obsolete the answer would have been, only by "*due process of law*" after "*presentment or indictment of a grand jury.*" But in this age of political prostitution and indiscriminate robbery, we find that estates are confiscated without indictment or trial; and, finally, the right of suffrage, the surest safeguard and final de-

fence of a free people, is to be taken away by one who is beneath all the usurpers he would imitate in everything save in his disingenuous spirit. The usurpation is too monstrous to be defended by any one who has just claims to manhood, and in fact I am persuaded finds but few defenders save among the corrupt and slavish menials who are unfit to be free. And this is the man whom my colleague [Mr. Arnold] associates in argument with the Saviour of mankind. He reads an extract from the irrepressible conflict speech which Lincoln made some years ago, and exclaims:

"This, the first emphatic enunciation of the philosophical fact of the antagonism between liberty and slavery, the eternal and 'irrepressible' conflict between them, electrified the country, and made Abraham Lincoln President of the United States."

"When the Son of God proclaimed a common Father and the universal brotherhood of man, He enunciated the great moral principle which brought on the irrepressible conflict with slavery."

Here he informs us that Christ only "enunciated the great moral principle which brought on this irrepressible conflict," while it was reserved to Lincoln eighteen centuries thereafter to make "the first emphatic enunciation of the philosophical fact of the antagonism between liberty and slavery," which he graciously tells us "electrified the country and made Abraham Lincoln President of the United States." I protest against this robbery of the illustrious dead. What will John Brown's ghost say when that apostle of bloody pikes finds himself thus unceremoniously kicked out of the company of Christ to give the seat of honor to the saintly form of Abraham? What will Jennison and Montgomery say? Lincoln had not so much as burned a barn upon the Missouri border, when saintly freedom-shriekers, now occupying high stations, civil and military, were holding up their bloody hands for favor at the orgies held over successful robberies, murders, and assassinations. What will Fremont and Hunter say? It was they to whom was first revealed the saving grace of proclamations of freedom. What will some of the sanctimonious constituents of my colleague say when they remember their pious pilgrimage from Chicago to Washington; and how, while they implored a proclamation in the name of God, Abraham was too carnal-minded to grant it? What will be said by the bolder pioneers in the "irrepressible conflict" who are now languishing in the penitentiaries for negro-stealing? They were brave enough to commence the work of emancipation without purse or scrip, each for himself, and solitary and alone, while Abraham could not come up to the good work until he thought himself backed by an Army of a million of armed soldiers and sustained by the prayers of whole divisions of contractors and contrabands. If any one is to be placed before Christ, let it be John Brown or Montgomery or Jennison. Even my colleague from the Bureau district [Mr. Lovejoy] has antecedents in this regard entitling him to a higher seat than our

distinguished Chief Magistrate. Seriously, Mr. Chairman, when my colleague [Mr. Arnold] again preceeds to enlighten us as to the pedigrees of these illustrious reformers, I hope he will reconcile the command of our Saviour, that servants should be "obedient to their masters," with the injunction of Brown, Lincoln & Co., which requires masters to be obedient to their slaves. But a few days ago, a Norfolk correspondent of the New York Times wrote as follows in regard to a negro raid which General Butler caused to be made into North Carolina:

"The material results of the raid may be summed up as follows: Between two and three thousand slaves were released from bondage, with whom were taken along about three hundred and fifty ox, horse, and mule teams, and from fifty to seventy-five saddle-horses, some of them valuable animals. The guerrillas lost thirteen killed and wounded; ten dwelling houses, with many thousand bushels of corn belonging to them, were burned, besides two distilleries; four of the camps were destroyed, and one of their number was hanged; and one hundred rifles, uniforms, infantry equipments, &c., fell into our hands as spoils, with a loss on the part of the brigade of twelve killed and wounded and one man taken prisoner. Besides this, fourteen rebel prisoners and four hostages were brought in.

"In regard to its moral and political results, however, the importance of the raid cannot be overestimated. The counties invaded by the colored troops were completely panic-stricken. Scores of families, for no cause but a guilty conscience, fled into the swamps on their approach. Never was a region thrown into such a commotion by a raid before. Proud scions of chivalry, accustomed to claim the most abject obedience from their slaves, literally fell on their knees before these armed and uniformed blacks and begged for their lives. I was frequently asked how I, a citizen, dared to trust myself among such incarnate demons. 'What shall I do to be saved?' was the question asked on every side."

Mr. Chairman, the faith of any one must be weak indeed if, after reading the many glowing accounts of expeditions, of which this is a specimen, they do not regard the war as over, and the people of both sections ready to embrace and forgive each other. We are told that the guerrillas lost in killed and wounded the immense number of *thirteen*, while our victorious army burned only *ten* habitations! But the greatest satisfaction is felt when we are assured by the writer that "in regard to its moral and political results, however, the importance of the raid cannot be overestimated." Certainly they cannot. "Scores of families" "fled into the swamps on their approach." The President, no doubt, feels well assured that those "proud scions of chivalry" who so abjectly "fell on their knees before these armed and uniformed blacks and begged for their lives," exclaiming "What shall I do to be saved?" will not hesitate in the presence of these armed negroes to take the oath he has so magnanimously prescribed. Of one thing, that they will keep an oath administered under such circumstances, he can feel no doubt. His rigid adherence to his own oaths

will cause him to suspect no mental reservation in others. This raid, Mr. Chairman, is but a specimen of the movements which have characterized many of our military operations during the past year in the valley of the Mississippi, and especially in the department of the Gulf. Plunder, wholesale and indiscriminate, upon the loyal and disloyal alike, if we may believe the correspondence published in our own papers, and information derived from other reliable sources, has been so common and conducted upon a scale so vast that it has become no longer a matter of surprise. It is perpetrated in every form, under the semblance of trade regulations, impressments by pretended levies upon the disloyal, and by military orders which afford sufficient pretexts for those whose choice pursuit is plunder. It is true that we hear occasionally that such men as Butler and Curtis have been suspended; but the hungry cormorants who seek plunder, and know they can obtain it under the auspices of such men, are not long in having them restored to commands where their cupidity may be gratified. The robberies under the reign of Butler at New Orleans have been so palpable as to shock the sensibilities of mankind. No prize was too great, no inducement too small for his enterprise. From the State capitol to the grave yard, from the parlor to the kitchen, his grasping hand was extended. All accounts agree that things have been done at New Orleans under the flag of our country which if not disavowed will disgrace the Government in all coming time. I will mention one instance as it was published in the *New Orleans Era*. That paper is the organ of the Administration there—the most of its articles are headed “by authority.” I will read the *Era's* report. It is in the following words:

“CONFISCATION OF TOMBSTONES.”

“There was one splendid monument—a stately column or pyramid, intended to mark the spot where rest the remains of Colonel Charles D. Dreux, the youthful orator who fell early in the war in command of a confederate battalion. This was constructed at a cost of \$1,500, and under the hammer of the auctioneer it brought but \$100. Cheap monument, if the purchaser intended it for his own tomb. There was another monument equal in size and beauty which brought only thirty dollars. Tombstones sold as cheap as marble.”

The whole world is familiar with the plunder of costly mansions and large estates, with robberies of churches and public institutions. From these we turn to the public sale of a dead man's tombstone. Nothing seemed too high or low for the robber's grasp. The result is that, instead of a restoration of law and order, the country occupied by our armies has in many instances been given over to pillage and plunder; and they who watched the approach of our proud old flag as the harbinger of peace, look now only upon a ruined country and a pillaged people. The just and considerate portion of our people will remember the barbarities, the shameless robberies

of this man who so suddenly rose from the ranks of his original secession friends to the grade of major general of volunteers; nor will they forget that his fame rests more upon his persecutions of the unarmed and unoffending than the terror he has caused among the rebels in the field. It is now nearly three years since he donned the Federal uniform. During that time he has planned Big Bethel and other similar disasters; but he has never, I believe, been in personal danger, or a party to the most unimportant skirmish, although by alleged violations of the laws of civilized warfare he has won for himself the outlawry of our enemies. This has been his chief military distinction; and now, after a year of repose in New England, we find him appointed to an important command in Virginia and North Carolina. With a cruelty quickened by public exposure, with his avarice stimulated by the success of former pillaging, and with a slavish subserviency to those whose motives he denounced for many years of his life, he is turned loose upon a rebellious people, who, whatever their sins may be, are at least sincere in regarding him as a monster. And when a few days ago a member from New York [Mr. FERNANDO WOOD] submitted a resolution calling for a committee to inquire into his conduct, the Republican members of this House, aided by one of the President's military appointees from Kentucky, [Mr. ANDERSON,] voted to suppress the investigation; and it was suppressed, and this man whose career is coupled with so many crimes is assured of immunity, and launches again with renewed license upon additional fields of plunder.

You may declaim as you will of your anxiety for peace, but with the President's programme of subjugating whole peoples and subverting the governments of States, and with such men as Butler despoiling whole communities in the name of confiscation, we cannot believe you sincere; and if sincere, it but demonstrates the utter unfitness of the party in power either to conduct the war or administer the Government in times of profoundest peace. I know that in calling attention to these things I shall be accused by paid officials and hired sycophants of sympathy for the rebel cause. The fate of all who have hitherto spoken boldly of the public perils, or dared to arraign the motives and conduct of the Administration, warns me that I need not hope to escape the tide of calumny which is ever in reserve for the defenders of constitutional liberty. I have counted well the cost of these things, and am prepared for the onset. Claiming to be a Union man, I am so unconditionally. I have been so consistently and persistently ever since the firing upon Fort Sumter, whatever censure I have cast upon those who could and ought to have avoided the war; and here in my place do I arraign the President and the supporters of his insane policy as willing or mistaken instruments of disunion. Doubtless some are so, because

they do not perceive the fatal tendencies of the policy to which they adhere; but the contest is now no less with *armed rebels* than with those who avow their purpose to *change or destroy* that Union which is the creature alone of the Constitution. They are, wherever found, traitors of the basest kind. Destitute, as they know themselves to be, of principle or personal courage, they are prompt in the presence of provost marshals and military guards to eject their spleen upon those who adhere to the Constitution. They are imperious and insulting now because their master is near; but their cowardice is too patent to be disguised, and the "stop thief" cry of treason which they impute to others will not always shield them from personal exposure and chastisement.

Those who are now loudest in shouting "loyalty" have spent long years in teaching treason to the people of the North. Their personal cowardice alone restrained them from open rebellion, but their teachings and principles were in all respects as treasonable as the ravings of the vilest secessionists in the land. Chase, Sumner, Phillips, Beecher, Fred. Douglass, Wade, Seward, John Brown, and most other representative men of the Republican party, have advocated the higher law doctrine of the rebellion for the last ten or fifteen years, and one of them has had the courage to make practical application of his principles. I allude, of course, to John Brown, who suddenly rose from the level of a horse-thief to the dignity of a Republican god, and who is now accepted by the President and his adherents as the prince of Republicans, a type of the true Christian reformer and "loyalist." I, sir, denounce the heretical teachings which caused John Brown to make his murderous foray upon Harper's Ferry, just as I do the rebellious teachings which caused the attack on Fort Sumter. Brown acted under a provisional government in antagonism to that of the United States; so did Davis and Stephens; Harper's Ferry belonged to the United States, so did Fort Sumter; Harper's Ferry was retaken by the military forces of the United States, Fort Sumter should have been reduced long ago; it would have been, had operations there been directed to a reduction of the fort instead of establishing free negro colonies at Hilton Head and Port Royal. John Brown was made prisoner, tried for murder and treason, found guilty, and hanged. Davis may be when he is captured or surrenders. Who, then, I ask, dared openly defend the crimes of John Brown? Only a few of the bolder fanatics who, like Wendell Phillips, had avowed themselves disunionists from the first. Who sing hosannas to his memory now? At least three-fourths of the Black Republican party, and the whole of that numerous class of paid stipendiaries and placemen who disgrace the press and the offices of the country. The rebels have never showered so many honors upon their dead or living leaders as you have upon this old murderer

whom you venerate simply because he was a traitor.

The soldiers who volunteered for the sole purpose of putting down rebellion and vindicating the law are often forced to march among the women and children of the South, who are too often insulted and plundered by the bad spirit and pillaging propensity which seem to enter so largely into the policy upon which this war is to be conducted; and they who impatiently listened for the airs and anthems which once told of union and nationality, often hear only from negro soldiers doggerel praises of John Brown and his murderous crew. The uniform which is the badge of a gentleman and the ensign of honor is worn now by depraved negroes whose instincts are almost as low and brutal as those at whose instance the profession of arms has been disgraced. The proud, brave, and patriotic white soldier, who left home, family, business, and everything in order to fight for and, if necessary, die for a restoration of all the States to the Union, is, by the present military policy, degraded to a level with the ignorant and brutal negro; and if he complain is punished, and his officer who may chance to share with him in his complaints is dishonorably (that's the word they use) dismissed the service. And these things, Mr. Chairman, are done by those intolerant zealots who would brand the defenders of the Constitution with such epithets as "traitor" and "copperhead!" I repeat, sir, I am among the unconditional Union men of the country.

Jefferson Davis and his adherents who sought to destroy the Union by dismemberment are traitors to the Constitution; but they were bold enough to avow their purposes, to appeal to the sword, and risk the dreadful consequences of their crimes. Their followers may have been wicked or misguided, but they made the issue boldly, and have so far met the consequences like brave and fearless men. I repeat, they are traitors; and to the laws of war first, and of the United States afterwards, they are amenable; but they are not the only traitors to the Constitution with whom we have to struggle. They may be honest and misguided, but throughout the entire North they are numbered by the thousand and tens of thousands; and here, here among the representatives of the people, are to be found dozens and scores who are as disloyal and treasonable to the Constitution as are the oldest and most hardened rebels in the South. It is with you as well as with the rebels of the South that the unconditional Union men have to deal. Jefferson Davis professed to be a Union man, but only upon *his* terms; but the unconditional Union men of the country rejected his conditions, and pointing to the Constitution they said, "We will have no terms but the Constitution as it is, no Union but that which it made." Sumner, Chase, Lincoln, Beecher, and all the leading spirits of this Administration *profess* to be Union men; but like the original secessionists of the South

they are so only upon their own terms. What are those terms? Indiscriminate robbery by military confiscation, and the subversion of the governments of almost half the States of the Union; converting them into territorial dependencies, changing the whole structure of the Federal Government, and ruling millions of people by standing armies and the sword. Such men, I repeat, are disunionists. Too cowardly to avow their purpose at the beginning of the war, they now seek to use the men and money which were given for the suppression of the rebellion to overthrow the institutions which all departments of the Government stood pledged to maintain.

For myself, while I reject the terms of the rebels, I turn with equal disdain from the no less reasonable conditions of those who seek unconstitutionally to overthrow the rights of individuals and of States. In my opinion, those who adhere to the cause of Jefferson Davis are no more reasonable in their aims than those who would apotheosize old John Brown, or join Fred. Douglas and Sumner in their schemes to annihilate the States of the South and obliterate them from the map of the world. Upon this issue, thus forced upon the loyal people, the battle of the Constitution is soon to be fought. Upon the result hangs a nation's existence. The forces are being marshaled for the fray. The idea of November will end the throes and agonies of an imperiled country, or the dead corpse of the Constitution and the liberties of the people will have found a sepulcher. The issue is vastly more important than the gravest which has yet been submitted to any portion of mankind. Trained, as I have been, to be ever hopeful of the good fortunes of my country, I will not now despair. The frightful corruption and bold usurpations of this Administration I will hope have not affected the integrity and patriotism of the mass of the people. This Capitol, from whence the stream of profligacy, venality, and corruption is issued, I trust is not at all symptomatic of a general relaxation of public morality. Always confident of the honesty and intelligence of the people, I will not despair of them now when such momentous issues are at stake. Knowing as they do that all our past greatness and glory resulted from adherence to the Constitution, they will cling the more closely to it now when dangers are thickening on every side. Their forbearance will be sorely tried. Every obstruction which usurpation can erect will impede their efforts; but they will never yield the right of suffrage while life remains. In every Northern State, with two or three humiliating exceptions, a majority of the people are lovers of the Union, and will array themselves upon the side of that Constitution by which it was made. Amid long suffering they have exhibited patience; should force be invoked to drive them from the polls, they will manifest the spirit of men who know their rights and have the courage to maintain them. They have been already warned, and being

warned they will not wait to be told to prepare. They are ready now; impatient for the hour when, with that weapon which is "formidable to tyrants only," they may speak peace to an agonizing people, reunion to a torn and dismembered country.

And why, I ask, should not the people everywhere array themselves upon the side of the Constitution? Those who talk of peace upon any other terms than the preservation of the Constitution, pure and simple, and a reunion of the States under it, are traitors at heart to that instrument, with whom I make no terms here or elsewhere. Upon all such, arguments are thrown away, but the people, the real people everywhere, those upon whom the burdens of the war fall most fearfully; whose industry is paralyzed by taxation, and whose homes, day by day, are being desolated, are impatient for the end of this unnatural struggle. It would be ended before the return of spring if common sense were allowed to control our rulers for a day. The people are not unmindful of the blessings of peace; they have felt the horrors of war; and they know that any peace, based upon the supremacy of the Constitution and followed by a reunion of the States, will be no less honorable to themselves than beneficial to them and their posterity. But the subjugation and degradation of five millions of free men cannot result in peace. A temporary truce you may have; a sullen silence may reign in a land made desolate by fire and sword; the hoof of the Federal horseman may press every foot of rebel soil, but there will be no peace. It will be a nation of permanent malcontents; and while the hand of social and political inequality rests upon them, the fires of vengeance will burn in every heart, and the flames of rebellion will again light up the land. None of us need be ignorant of the temper and character of the people who are in arms. They are of the same race as ourselves. They were born free, and have been taught principles of Anglo-Saxon liberty in the same schools with us. While we may abhor the treason which first impelled their leaders and deplore the delusion which nerves the arms of their followers, we cannot shut our eyes to the fact that the great body of them have been sincere. It is evidenced by their patient endurance and terrible courage, their trials and sufferings, and the tenacity with which they cling to a desperate contest. I am not alone in this estimate of rebel heroism. I will remind those who declare it treasonable to find anything to admire in the character of a foe, that more than I have said was admitted during the last year by one sufficiently fanatical to pass as orthodox, even among contractors or contrabands, Loyal Leaguers or Free Lovers. During the last year the Reverend Henry Ward Beecher published an article in his newspaper, the *Independent*, in which he said:

"In another column of our paper Mr. Greeley expresses his opinion that the war draws to a close, and that this year will probably see it ended. He

does not give the facts on which such judgment is based, and it must be regarded as the impression produced by the whole course of events, and their present condition, upon his mind.

"But judgments of this kind are but little more than the reflection of personal temperament. Opposite opinions will be formed in view of the same facts, by two men equally wise, simply because one is sanguine, and dwells upon the hopeful aspects, while the other, cautious and slow of belief, weighs the difficulties and dangers.

"We can see how the war easily might be short, and that it may be near its close. But we see with equal clearness that it may be protracted for several years to come. Nor is it in the power of any man at present to judge which of the two possible courses events will show.

"We see no substantial evidence that the South is yet discouraged. What legislature, convention, or influential man, even, has uttered a desponding word? The spirit of the people is not broken. With a few exceptions, the intelligent prisoners who are taken hold one language, and that is of firm, resolute, bitter determination to resist to the uttermost. Nor can we learn that those who stay at home, and who suffer great deprivations, are weary or discouraged. Even when hunger drives women to riot and violence, it is remarkable that they demand 'bread,' but never 'peace!' Indeed, we are free to say that we cannot repress our admiration of the conduct of the southern people in this terrible struggle. It needs only a worthy cause to be regarded as heroic. They seek to establish a detestable system of slavery. They seek for that end the overthrow of a beneficial Government. Their cause is as bad as it well can be. Nevertheless, they have given up all things for what they regard as their country. They have relinquished luxuries, submitted to hardships, suffered bereavements and losses, not only without murmuring, but eagerly; and after two years of trials that may be said almost to have revolutionized the interior of southern society, and reduced them to the minimum of comfort, they are undiscouraged. They are even more fierce and bitter than ever."

Sir, every candid man knows that this is a correct representation of the spirit of our enemies. It is still unbroken; and if this Government persists in rejecting those moral agencies which should accompany the sword, other sanguinary battles must be fought, in which the slaughter will be commensurate with the heroism of the combatants. That heroism is the birthright of all American people. Do not wisdom and humanity require that such a people should be won back to allegiance rather than driven to that resistance which is the desperate offspring of despair; and that our own brave soldiers should be restored to their families and friends, rather than be further sacrificed to the designs of those who would protract the war for plunder or power? Each party to the contest has exhibited that courage and endurance which will illustrate our annals in all coming time. Each can boast of its heroes. I would to Heaven each had fewer martyrs to mourn. Everywhere the prayers of millions are being offered up for a return of peace. There is scarcely a rude hamlet in the land in which the cry of sorrow is not heard; not a household without its seats made vacant by the destroying hand

of war; not a village which is not shrouded in the drapery of woe, because of sons and brothers, husbands and fathers, numbered among the absent or slain. Are not these things alone sufficient to incline our hearts to peace, and to cause us to seek it wherever it may be with honor found? He who in this hour of impending peril refuses to hear or heed the wail of lamentation which comes up from the hovels of the poor and unoffending, or to avail himself of every honorable means to stay the further effusion of blood, is a wretch unfit to live and too base to die. If asked how I would stop the war, in a manner honorable to my country, I would answer, cease robbing whole communities, cease your vandal attempt to melt all mankind of every race, color, and condition into one crude, inorganic mass; cease to spurn the counsels of the Union men of the rebellious States; cease to place them upon a footing with traitors and rebels; cease to regard non-combatants, women and children, as alien enemies, fit only to be plundered. Place your armies under the control of those who war only upon armed enemies, and who will make the flag of your country a sure protection to all who, during the long night of rebellion, have so eagerly watched its coming. Let your only object in fighting be, and so declare it to the world, to put down rebellion, restore all the States to the Union, protect and defend the Constitution with all its guarantees. Let your President annul those proclamations which stamp him as a usurper, and offer amnesty and pardon in good faith to all who will lay down their arms and take an oath to support, not his free-negro proclamations, but the Constitution of the United States. Do this, and before the breath of spring has melted the ice from your Northern lakes, the armies of rebellion will have melted away. Such a result is foretold by all who are familiar with the temper and feelings of the people of the South, no less than by all the teachings of history.

England has tried for centuries to anglicize Ireland by the hand of political and religious inequality; the result is that the Irish as a class are as alien to England as they were one hundred years ago. For ages Russia has pursued a similar policy in regard to Poland; the result is that all Europe is at this moment convulsed because the first military Power of the world cannot learn that the prejudices of a whole people can be removed only by confidence, forbearance, and respect. Sir, it is not to considerations of humanity alone that I look in urging upon you a total change of the policy which animates our rulers in the conduct of the war. I have said that the fate of the nation is involved; that the perpetuity of the Union and the liberties of the people of the North are imperiled. I know how difficult it is to reach the ear of the President or touch the understanding of his advisers. While all military operations are suspended and our armies compelled to remain inactive because of the rigors of winter, the White House is be-

sieged by an army of officials whose surest passport to promotion is a blind and slavish admiration of him who dispenses power and patronage. He hears nothing but from sycophants; heeds nothing which is not laudatory of his greatness; reads nothing but fulsome praises of his administrative abilities, and hearkens to no counsel which does not assure him of a re-election. To such an extent does this mania for re-election control him, that only a few evenings since he attended a model artist's exhibition in this Hall, at which an unsexed woman nominated him for re-election. It was done in his personal presence, amid the applause of the ladies and gentlemen, courtesses and contractors, parasites and placemen, then and there assembled. While our sentinels were freezing at their posts; while brothers were perishing by slow degrees in a hostile conflict, rendered doubly appalling by the fury of the elements, the Chief Magistrate of the country was in attendance at a political "Canterbury," where the chief and most ludicrous act was his own nomination for re-election. The performance being unique, of course the attendance was large. The chief political *danseuse* proposed the name of Abraham Lincoln, as previously arranged by the managers, and all the *attaches* said yea, as they thought of their days of lengthened official repose in Abraham's bosom.

Every cloud is said to have a silver lining, and the worst of evils not to be wholly inseparable from good; and should the people again elect "the honestest man in Springfield" to the Presidency, may we hope for some change in the *personnel* of the Government? The brave and intrepid Sumner may yet command the army of the Potomac; Fred. Douglas may yet succeed the irrepressible Seward; while the "political woman" may be installed as grand inspector of the royal household. Doubtless when a few more strong-minded women have gathered around the Capitol the avenue will emit a sweeter fragrance, quite as delightful as the odor of the Presidential mansion on New Year's day, when greasy negroes were presented to the President amid the blandest smiles of their fair countrywomen of American descent. What American citizen who witnessed the animating scene did not rejoice at the rapid social progress the country has made under the rule of Abraham the First! Our colored friends, who under former administrations dared not obtrude themselves at the White House, are now allowed to be gallant to the estimable ladies of high officials, while that high functionary, the President, looks approvingly upon the bewitching scene. Amid so many gay and festive scenes as are daily transpiring at the White House, it is unreasonable to expect that the President can bestow much attention upon public affairs. The crowds of daily visitors, male and female, black and white, are so large and continuous that his Excellency's time is chiefly consumed in thanking the different delegations who are sent to invoke his acceptance of a second

official term. With his surroundings, it cannot be expected that he will hear or heed those who believe that his re-election will be the greatest calamity which can befall our country. Where he disposed to give thought or attention to the mutterings of fearful apprehension and discontent which are audible throughout the North, I would commend to him the words of Sir Francis Bacon, who, whatever else he might have been, was the profoundest thinker of his age. Said he:

"As for discontents, they are in the body politic like to humors in the natural, which are apt to gather a preternatural heat and to inflame; and let no prince measure the danger of them by this whether they be just or unjust, for that were to imagine people to be too reasonable, who do often burn at their own good; not yet by this, whether the griefs whereupon they rise be in fact great or small, for they are the most dangerous discontents where the fear is greater than the feeling. *DOLENDI MODUS TIMENDI NON ITEM.* Besides, in great oppressions the same things that provoke the patience do withal mete the courage, but in fears it is not so. Neither let any prince or state be secure concerning discontents because they have been often or have been long, and yet no peril hath ensued; for, as it is true that every vapor or fume doth not return into a storm, so it is nevertheless true that storms, though they do blow over divers times, yet may fall at last, and as the Spanish proverb notheth well, 'The cord breaketh at last by the weakest pull.'"

I will not assume that the President is one of those who can neither learn nor forget anything. He has learned boldness as a usurper, and how to be false to his pledges. But, if I may be permitted to appeal to the selfishness of his peculiar admirers, I would suggest that a further continuation of war in a manner which involves unnecessarily such vast expenditures of life and treasure, is not the surest way to perpetuate power; and those who have so suddenly acquired fortunes by availing themselves of the public calamities might pause to ask if peace will not more surely secure their present gains than war add an increase of store. There is a point of endurance beyond which even nations cannot go—a precipice which they cannot safely approach. I fear we are already standing at its verge, beyond which the yawning gulf of social and financial ruin awaits us all. A people hitherto unaccustomed to taxation, with no knowledge of a public debt but traditional horror of its miseries, is suddenly called upon to confront a national indebtedness of over two thousand millions! These figures are startling, yet the sum is increasing at the rate of more than two millions per day, presaging inevitable paralysis and bankruptcy to all. No interest is too great, no industry too small, no investment too secure, to escape the storm which is gathering and impending over us. The annual interest upon our public indebtedness, at six per cent. per annum, will amount to over one hundred and twenty millions—nearly twice the amount of the ordinary annual estimates of the expenses of the Govern-

ment under former Administrations, nearly double the sum of our annual average expenditures during the Administration which waged the war with Mexico. If we grant that this indebtedness has been necessary or unavoidable, the figures still stare us in the face, suggestive of a future financial crisis which a wise statesmanship would seek to palliate or avoid. How this in my judgment can best be done, I have indicated in what I have already said. What disasters your policy will force upon the country I shall not attempt to portray. You seem not to be wholly insensible to the danger, though you have manifested your unfitness for meeting or avoiding it.

True, you may for a while delude your victims by pointing to the abundance of money which is seeking investment, stimulating the marts of business and enlivening the avenues of trade; but a day of those panics which logically follow inflated issues of paper, and which feed upon the fears of commerce and industry, will remove the delusion. Then the people will learn that money is not mere promises to pay; that wealth consists not in what they owe themselves; and that the elevation of the negro to social and political equality with the whites is a poor equivalent for national bankruptcy, repudiation and ruin. For days and weeks your ingenuity has been sorely tried in devising some mode by which immense sums of additional taxation may be wrung from the pockets of a hitherto complaining people. Every step you have taken but disclosed the magnitude of the amounts already expended, and the additional sums you propose to squander. Taxes heretofore imposed with caution, and submitted to reluctantly by the people, are now to be doubled and quadrupled. Labor which only staggered under blows hitherto inflicted, is soon to be paralyzed by increased burdens; prices which have advanced articles of necessity to the poor almost beyond their reach, are to be pushed to the point which wholly prohibits them; while gold, the only true representative of values, is to be banished from the country, or hoarded until bankruptcy shall have left the labor and industry of our once happy land to the mercies of the miser and his capital. The full details of your mammoth schemes of taxation cannot now be known; but the country may rest assured that every interest will soon feel the shock of your inexorable demands. While their sons and brothers are being unwillingly dragged into the Army by a more rigorous conscription, or forced to give their all to avoid its requirements, an army of *volunteer* tax-gatherers is being organized for a campaign throughout the free States of the North. There is not a conscript or private among them. Each is a veteran volunteer; each carries the commission and wears the badge of his master. Already they are beginning to hover around the cabins of the poor. As carrion birds instinctively scent their prey, so they can discern from afar the pittance of the poor. But

I prefer that time shall unfold to them the sufferings and indignities which they are yet to endure. I pray they may have the courage and the patriotism to feel that their country demands the sacrifice they are soon to make. History, while it teaches that its laws are, in the main, general and unerring, has recorded certain apparent exceptions. To these exceptions we are apt to recur as safe precedents when the logic of events begins to expose our fallacies. In my judgment those who regard a public debt so enormous as ours as a public blessing, or who effect to see no danger in attempting to wring from the people the burdens which your taxation imposes, will find themselves mistaken. England, which for ages has ground her poor to pay the expenses of ambitious ministers, has suddenly become a model government with many of the supporters of this Administration, while, in Dixie, the adherents of Davis have discovered that a limited monarchy is the best guarantor of constitutional freedom. Whatever England may *now* be, this we know, that she has attained her present position by protracted wars and oppressive taxation; and if you who boast of England as a model of good government will only inform our people of the road she has traveled, and point them to the privations of her poor, I shall have increased confidence in the future good fortunes of my country. Sidney Smith, whose name alone suggests to all intelligent men who and what he was, left nothing more valuable to mankind than his picture of the costs of war and the expense of national glory. This is what he tells us of the condition of Englishmen as a consequence of war and taxation. Addressing himself directly to Americans, he said:

"We can inform Brother Jonathan what are the inevitable consequences of being too fond of glory. 'Taxes' upon every article which enters into the mouth, or covers the back, or is placed under the foot; taxes upon everything which it is pleasant to see, hear, feel, smell, or taste; taxes upon warmth, light, and locomotion; taxes on everything on earth and the waters under the earth, on everything that comes from abroad, or is grown at home; taxes on the raw material; taxes on every fresh value that is added to it by the industry of man; taxes on the sauce which pampers man's appetite, and the drug that restores him to health; on the ermine which decorates the judge, and the rope which hangs the criminal; on the poor man's salt and the rich man's spice; on the brass nails of the coffin and the ribbons of the bride; at bed or board, couchant or levant, we must pay. The schoolboy whips his taxed top; the beardless youth manages his taxed horse with a taxed bridle, on a taxed road; and the dying Englishman pouring his medicine, which has paid seven per cent., into a spoon that has paid fifteen per cent., flings himself back upon his chintz bed, which has paid twenty-two per cent., and expires in the arms of an apothecary who has paid a license of one hundred pounds for the privilege of putting him to death. His whole property is then immediately taxed from two to ten per cent. Besides the probate, large fees are demanded for burying him in the chancel; his virtues are handed down to posterity on taxed marble; and he is then gathered to his fathers—to be taxed no more."

Sir, none of us would have supposed four years ago that this picture of misery and oppression would be so soon presented to us as a terrible reality. But it is so. Nor will this generation live to see the shackles of taxation stricken from their limbs. Far off in the distant future, generations yet unborn will bewail the load of debt which is being entailed upon them by the madness of the times. I implore you in their name to retrace your steps, and that you listen to the voice of those who point you to the Constitution as the only road which leads to a lasting Union and a permanent peace. Adherence to that instrument will speedily end this terrible war; it will secure and perpetuate the public repose. The friends of the Constitution look confidently to the approach of the November elections. Upon the result we stake the life of the Constitution, the perpetuation of empire. The armies of the Democracy are ready for the conflict. Their numbers already may be counted by millions. Whatever in the past their faults and errors may have been, they never oppressed the citizen or usurped doubtful or forbidden powers. Their past conflicts with the enemies of constitutional union will reanimate every heart and nerve the weakest arm. Their past history in warring against despotism and usurpation is a guaranty that they will not abuse power intrusted to them by the people. They will recognize as brothers all who vindicate the Constitution and cling to that Union which it made. Though the terrible convulsions of the times have driven many of its Southern leaders into the armies of rebellion, though many of its once-honor-

ed chieftains in the North have yielded, like Judas, to the temptations of power, and are now among the basest of the venal tribe, that grand old party has lost nothing of its ancient *prestige* or moral power. Its expurgation has been thorough, its purification complete. Its Butlers, Dickinsons, Busteeds, and Milroys, of the North, its treasonable leaders of the South, no longer defile the temple, sacred to the true defenders of the Constitution. In their place we have all that was most respectable of the old-line Whigs, those who still cherish the teachings of their illustrious leaders, Webster and Clay. Honest Republicans will rally around our standard; and even the Know-Nothings—those who affected to tremble at the power of the Pope—will eagerly join that party which, in upholding the Constitution, secures freedom of conscience to all. Already they have learned that there is more to be feared from the unlicensed power of usurpation at home than from all the bulls which ever emanated from the Papal See. I say to the friends of Constitutional Union everywhere: Be of good cheer. Hope illumines the future. The prize for which we contend is no less than the Constitution which our fathers ordained. It has borne us safely and securely amid the dangers of the past; if we are true to ourselves now we will rescue it from the hands of its destroyers, and, bearing it aloft everywhere, we will point to its pure and ample folds as the only harbinger of peace, the sole bond of union among the States, the last citadel in which the citizen may find security and defy the oppressor's power.

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The "CONSTITUTIONAL UNION" has won, since its establishment, the heartiest approval of all national and conservative men, for its able and fearless advocacy of Constitutional Liberty, Constitutional Rights, and Constitutional Principles; and as the Publisher desires to enlarge the field of its operations by an increase in its subscription list and a more extended circulation, he is encouraged in the belief that it may be made a means of vast and greater usefulness in the important work of the Preservation of the Union, which, in its inscrutable wisdom, Providence has committed to the National Conservative Democracy; and in which the form of Constitutional Government is to be preserved, there must be no timidity, or delay. The "CONSTITUTIONAL UNION" will continue whatever in the past as it has done from its commencement, its constitutional right of free press, while it will earnestly contend for the entire Freedom of Speech, or usurped doubt-ranneled ballot for the people, unawed and undismayed by the intervention of armed men at the polls.

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We propose at this time, and earnestly urge the suffering and oppressed people all over the land, to organize themselves at once into Constitutional Clubs and Associations, so that, being thoroughly united, by the force of the Constitutional Ballot, the

"Weapon surer set,
And better than the bayonet."

and in promoting the increased circulation of the Democratic Conservative Newspaper we issue, there may be aroused the now latent spirit of American Freedom to an open issue at the ballot-box with the usurpers of their rights, so as to with certainty secure, by a constitutional victory at the polls, a restoration of law and order in the administration of the Government, and the election in the autumn of 1864 of a President of the United States who will faithfully and constitutionally administer the duties of his great office.

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
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